

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



February 2024

[Student Opportunities](#)

[Professional Opportunities](#)

[Resources](#)

[Reminders](#)

[Ask Coco](#)

[Scholarships/Funding Opportunities](#)

[Connect With Our Office](#)

[Monthly Calls](#)

Message from Louisiana School Counselor Association (LSCA)

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

It is my honor to serve as the new President of the Louisiana School Counselor Association (LSCA). We have some amazing individuals serving on our executive board & committees. We are here to support professional school counselors as they assist students and their families in academic, college/career, and social/emotional development. LSCA also promotes the state-wide recognition of school counselors. During the 2023 LCA Conference, LSCA celebrated some amazing school counselors at our Annual Luncheon which was held October 8, 2023.

Elementary School Counselor of the Year finalists: Khakillya Babers-Everett; Oak Park Elem; Tracie Bordelon, LEO Judice Elem; Meghan Dwyer; R.J. Vial Elem; Lemesa Fleury; Eden Gardens Elem; Sharon James; Pearl Watson Elementary.

The overall Elementary School Counselor of the Year was **Ms. Lemesa Fleury!**

Middle School Counselor of the Year finalists: Sarah Martin, Milton Middle; Robin Wood, Caroline Dorman Junior High

The overall Middle School Counselor of the Year was **Ms. Sarah Martin!**

High School Counselor of the Year finalists: Joshua Allridge, East St. John High; Chastity Craven, Carencro High; Jessica Walker, West Feliciana High; Jacquelyn Walther, Hahnville High.

The overall High School Counselor of the Year was **Ms. Jessica Walker!**

Our **2023 Louisiana School Counselor of the Year was Ms. Sarah Martin!**

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Professional School Counselors



LSCA started a new initiative this year, "Counselor Spotlight" where you can nominate school counselors who go above and beyond to meet the needs of their students. Do you know that school counselor? If so, please visit <https://www.louisianaschoolcounselor.com/awards> and submit those nominations! If you are interested in connecting and collaborating with other Louisiana School Counselors, join LSCA. For more information, please visit our website; ([louisianaschoolcounselor.com](https://www.louisianaschoolcounselor.com)) and follow us on social media platforms: Twitter (@MyLSCA); Instagram(@MyLSCA); Facebook/LinkedIn (Louisiana School Counselor Association). Again, I am honored to represent LSCA as President this year and I wish all of you a wonderful school year!

Taneka M. Fuller, NCC, LPC-S, NCSC
LSCA President, 2023-2024
Bossier High School

Student Opportunities

The 2024-2025 FAFSA is Open

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

Federal Student Aid (FSA) has started the [soft launch](#) of the 2024-25 FAFSA® form. During this time, the form will be available for periods of time over the coming days while FSA monitors site performance and responds to any potential issues. FSA will also be initiating pauses to the site, during which time the form will not be available while they conduct site maintenance.

If students/parents visit the site during a pause, they should check back later to access the form to complete their FAFSA®.

If you have scheduled a FAFSA® Completion event with LOSFA and want to reschedule your upcoming FAFSA Completion Workshop, please email losfa.scheduling@la.gov with your school/organization name, current FAFSA® Completion Workshop date/time, and at least two "new" date/time options. Our Events and Outreach Coordinator will work with you to reschedule your FAFSA® Completion Workshop.

Please contact losfa.counselors@la.gov for more information.

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



StudentAid.gov Account Creation for Individuals without a Social Security Number

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

LOSFA has outlined a [process](#) to follow for an individual without an SSN to have their identity verified and a StudentAid.gov account created.

Please contact losfa.counselors@la.gov for more information.

FAFSA events

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

FAFSA® Frenzy Week - LOSFA is hosting a statewide **FAFSA® Frenzy Week (Monday-Sunday), February 5-11, 2024**, and is inviting [postsecondary institutions](#) to host at least one FAFSA® Completion event during the week. Institutions will have the flexibility to host one event during this week or multiple events, depending on their availability.

High schools are encouraged to direct their students and parents to local sites to receive FAFSA® completion assistance. Returning and non-traditional students will also be encouraged to participate.

FAFSA® Fridays - On Fridays, LOSFA team members will host several virtual StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) sessions throughout the day where students, parents, and counselors can join to receive assistance with creating a StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) Account. These sessions are open to classrooms or individuals. [Register for FAFSA Fridays.](#)

Please contact losfa.counselors@la.gov for more information.

USDA 1890 National Scholars Program

Please share with principals, counselors, teachers, and testing coordinators.

USDA's Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) manages the 1890 National Scholars Program, which is aimed at increasing the number of students from rural and underserved communities who study food, agriculture, natural resources and other related sciences. The scholarship provides recipients with full tuition, fees, books, room and board. Scholars attend one of the 1890 land-grant universities and pursue degrees in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or related academic disciplines.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Tiffany Franklin, Southern University USDA Liaison, 301-974-7731
tiffany.franklin2@usda.gov

Dr. Jerrick L. Hornbeak, West Virginia USDA Liaison, 225-577-3447
Jerrick.hornbeak@usda.gov

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors

Graduation Appeal Process Veto

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

On January 8, 2024, Governor Landry vetoed the graduation appeals process for students who fail to pass required LEAP 2025 assessments. This veto immediately goes into effect, preventing any additional appeals from being submitted to the LDOE.

[Please see the letter from the State Superintendent](#)

If you have immediate questions regarding the impact of the veto, please consult your principal.

HiSet Data

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

Due to data privacy and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) limitations, school systems will need to request HiSet completion information directly from former students who earned their HiSet or their legal guardians. This is a difference from previous year processes.

Please contact your System Data Manager if you have questions.

Professional Opportunities

Spring 2024 Counselor Institutes

Please share with middle and high school counselors, assistant principals, CTE supervisors, JAG instructors and secondary supervisors.

Registration for the Spring 2024 Counselor Institute sessions is now open via Eventbrite. **Please share with your JAG, ROTC and CTE colleagues.** Counselor Institute sessions are a great opportunity for counselors and others who work with students on their journey towards graduation and beyond. Participants will gain updated information on policy, resources, and best practice. Please register individually. Maximum registration is based on location capacity.

Date	8 - 11a.m.	1 - 4p.m.
February 27	Bossier Parish	Ouachita Parish
February 28	Rapides Parish	Calcasieu Parish
February 29	Livingston Parish	Jefferson Parish

Please contact angela.jordan@la.gov with questions.

COUNSELOR CONNECT

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Professional School Counselors

2024 Teacher Leader Summit

Please share with school system leaders, and secondary principals, assistant principals, and school counselors.

The 2024 Teacher Leader Summit is an annual professional learning conference that brings together Louisiana birth to grade 12 educators and content experts. Educators participating in the event will share their knowledge, learn new skills, and prepare for the 2024-2025 school year. This year's [Teacher Leader Summit](#) will focus on our ability to lead the next level every single day. **School Counselors** are encouraged to attend, as several sessions within the Office of Career and College Readiness will be curated for their work streams. The [Teacher Leader Summit Overview](#) outlines the specifics of the Teacher Leader Summit.

- The TL Summit will take place from **May 28 - May 30, 2024** at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center (NOENMCC) in New Orleans, LA.
- Registration for this event is now open, and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. As space is limited, it is **strongly encouraged** to register early.
- Registration Fees: \$175 (Early Bird; ends February 2, 2024); \$200 (Regular)

Please contact events@emergentmethod.com with questions.

Teacher Leader Summit Presenter Applications

LDOE is looking for talented educators to apply to present sessions at this year's Summit. [Presenter applications](#) will open January 5 and **will close February 2**.

Applications on the following topics will be prioritized during selection:

- High Quality Professional Learning Cycle
- Observation and Feedback
- [Professional Learning Roadmap](#) Implementation
- Instructional Leadership Teams
- Teacher Collaboration
- Career Pipeline

Please contact events@emergentmethod.com with questions.

New Fast Forward Career Option Codes

Share with CTE supervisors, principals, counselors, and secondary supervisors.

Postsecondary Readiness will host a webinar discussing the recent Fast Forward Pathways Career Option Codes updates. The new codes became effective during the 2023-2024 school year.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** February 6; 9 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99482276597>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312.626.6799
- **Meeting ID:** 994 8227 6597
- **Passcode:** 859060

Please contact caronda.bean@la.gov with questions.

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors

College Board Weekly Office Hours

Please share with principals, counselors, AP teachers, and testing coordinators.

The College Board is offering weekly office hours starting on August 8. Topics will include the AP 2024 exam schedule and digital AP exams. Please feel free to join the weekly discussion on any questions that you have about AP exams and resources.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Every Tuesday; 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [Microsoft Teams Meeting Link](#)
- **Webinar ID:** 232 293 189 414
- **Passcode:** 7VQcYk

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov for more information.

ACT® Data: Accelerating Your School and Student Success 2.0

Please share with principals, counselors, teachers, and testing coordinators.

[Registration](#) is open for the ACT® Data Workshop. This workshop will involve a deep dive into student, school, and district ACT® assessment reports through ACT's Online Reporting System. Participants should bring their laptop and have access to their school/district's ACT® Online Reporting System through ACT's Success Portal.

- **When:** February 29, 2024; 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- **Where:** 1201 N Third St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802
- **Cost:** Free

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov for more information.

Registered Apprenticeship Quarterly Call

Please share with CTE supervisors, secondary supervisors, principals, and counselors.

The postsecondary readiness team hosts a quarterly apprenticeship call on the 3rd Tuesday every four months at 11 a.m. The calls will address apprenticeship opportunities and updates related to enrollment reporting, funding, and the development of programs.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** February 20; 11 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92183263782?>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 1-312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID:** 921 8326 3782
- **Passcode:** 936910

Please contact caronda.bean@la.gov with questions.

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



Resources

2023 - 2024 STS is open

Please share with principals and counselors.

2023 - 2024 STS is open and ready for system data managers to upload first semester transcripts. Please ensure your fall transcripts are viewable and corrected in STS by the mid-year data pull on February 9, 2024.

Please contact your system data manager with questions.

FAFSA Frenzy Week

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

LOSFA is hosting a statewide **FAFSA® Frenzy Week (Monday-Sunday), February 5-11, 2024**, and is inviting [postsecondary institutions](#) to host at least one FAFSA® Completion event during the week. Institutions will have the flexibility to host one event during this week or multiple events, depending on their availability.

High schools are encouraged to direct their students and parents to local sites to receive FAFSA® completion assistance. Returning and non-traditional students will also be encouraged to participate.

Under the new process, all contributors who are required to provide financial information on a FAFSA® form will need a StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) Account. This means neither students nor parents will be able to access the FAFSA® form until they have created a StudentAid.gov Account. It will take 1-3 days for the information to be confirmed by the Social Security Administration (SSA) before the StudentAid.gov account (FSA ID) can be used to complete the FAFSA® form.

To ensure that your students and their contributors are prepared to begin the 2024-2025 FAFSA®, please encourage them to create their StudentAid.gov Account prior to attending a FAFSA® completion event. You can also request an FSA ID workshop with LOSFA.

Please contact LOSFA.Counselors@la.gov with questions.

FAFSA Fridays

Please share with principals, counselors, and teachers.

On Fridays, LOSFA team members will host several virtual StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) sessions throughout the day where students, parents, and counselors can join to receive assistance with creating a StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) Account. These sessions are open to classrooms or individuals. [Register for FAFSA Fridays.](#)

Please contact losfa.counselors@la.gov for more information.

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A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



2023-2024 ACT® Counselor's Guide

Please share with administrators, counselors, and testing coordinators.

ACT® is offering a free [Counselor's Guide for the 2023-2024 school year](#). The guide will provide information regarding national offerings of the ACT® test, tools and resources to help support students, season-based timelines for juniors and seniors, test preparation, and so much more.

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov with questions.

Top 10 ACT® Free Resources

Please share with administrators, counselors, and testing coordinators.

ACT® has come up with a top 10 list of free resources for [counselors](#), [students](#), and [parents](#). The resources on each of these lists are ordered by popularity and include links to directly download the asset listed. Other free resources are the [ACT® Test Guide](#) and [Preparing for the ACT® eBook](#). These resources will deepen your understanding of the information students and parents are looking for as they think about high school life and the journey beyond.

Please contact charmaine.cureton@la.gov with questions.

Reminders

Diploma and Seal Orders

Please share with school system administrators and counselors.

Please use the [Diploma Order Form](#) to submit an order for 2023-2024 high school graduates. Diploma requests should be submitted by **Friday, February 2, 2024**. Diplomas ordered will include the signature of the new BESE President, Ronnie Morris. Diplomas utilized from this point forward should include the new signature. All other diplomas should be shredded, as they are no longer valid.

Please contact suzette.rabalais@la.gov with questions.

SCA Spring Reporting

Please share with CTE supervisors, secondary supervisors, school administrators and counselors.

The [SCA Portal](#) is still open for spring reporting for enrollments with Public Higher Education providers. The deadline to report is on **March 11** at 5 pm.

Please contact sca@la.gov with questions.

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors

Community Service Diploma Endorsement

Please share with school system administrators and counselors.

Students have the opportunity to earn 80 hours of community service during their high school years and earn the [Community Service Diploma Endorsement](#). Visit the [Diploma Endorsement webpage](#) for more information.

Please contact suzette.rabalais@la.gov with questions.

State Seal of Biliteracy

Please share with school system administrators and counselors.

Since the approval of RS 17:273.4 in 2024, Louisiana students may earn the State Seal of Biliteracy by demonstrating literacy in English and another language. Along with the [Diploma Order Form](#), school systems should submit the [Seals of Biliteracy Request Document](#).

High schools with at least 5% of their graduating class earning the Seal of Biliteracy will be celebrated at the **June BESE meeting**.

Please contact language.aquisition@la.gov with questions.

Proficiency by Exam/Portfolio

Please share with school system administrators and counselors.

Bulletin 741 §2314. Carnegie Credit and Credit Flexibility contains a policy concerning student's earning proficiency credit by exam or portfolio.

- Per policy, school systems must [report](#) exams/portfolios used to award credit by proficiency
- Students may only earn credit by exam or portfolio in a course in which **they have never been enrolled and received no formal instruction**

Contact stephanie.marcum@la.gov with questions.

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A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



Ask CoCo

Q & A With COounselor COnnect!

Q: When is National School Counseling Week? -The "Proud of My Profession" Counselor

A: [National School Counseling Week 2024 \(#NSCW24\)](#) is Feb. 5-9, 2024, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week, sponsored by ASCA, highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career. National School Counseling Week is always celebrated the first full week in February. **The 2024 theme is "School Counseling: Standards-Based, Student-Focused."**

ASCA 2024 Photo Challenge

Download each day's sign, take a picture or video with it and post it to your social media channels with #NSCW24. Follow #NSCW24 to see how school counselors across the country are celebrating. [Download all five signs.](#)

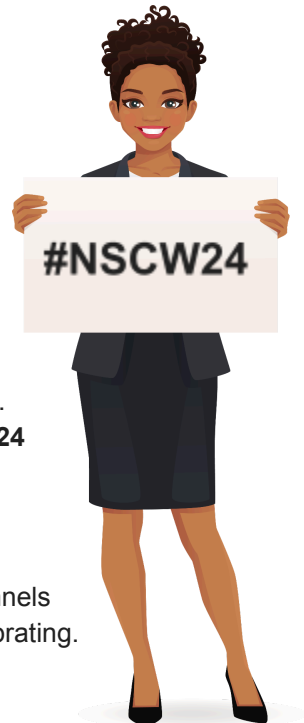
Monday, Feb 5, 2024: I use standards to develop a school counseling program that...

Tuesday, February 6, 2024: I use ASCA standards I depend on the most are...

Wednesday, February 7, 2024: The ASCA standards I depend on the most are...

Thursday, February 8, 2024: I am student-focused because...

Friday, February 9, 2024: I advocate for the school counseling profession by...



Scholarships/Funding Opportunities

[USDA/1890 National Scholarship Opportunity](#)

For more information please contact:

Dr. Tiffany Franklin, Southern University USDA Liaison, 301-974-7731 tiffany.franklin2@usda.gov

Dr. Jerrick L. Hornbeak, USDA Liaison 225-577-3447 Jerrick.Hornbeak@usda.gov

[Niche \\$25,000 "No Essay" Scholarship](#)

[Army ROTC Scholarships](#)

[James T Godwin Memorial Scholarship](#) (Military affiliation)

COUNSELOR CONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



Jump Start Construction Scholarship Application

The Louisiana Construction Education Foundation (LCEF), Louisiana's Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) are now accepting [applications](#) for the Jump Start Construction Connect Scholars Program. This program is the state's first and only scholarship dedicated exclusively to Jump Start graduates who have earned a Jump Start credential and a Louisiana high school diploma and subsequently enroll in an LCTCS Construction Pathway Program or Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) training program the summer or fall immediately following graduation. This scholarship will assist graduates in gaining the necessary training to earn industry employment in construction crafts fields aligned to four and five-star jobs that may lead to management positions. Applications are due **April 19, 2024**.

Eligibility Requirements

Any high school senior who has a National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) credential, will earn a Jump Start Career Diploma and enroll in an LCTCS construction pathway program or an ABC training program in the summer or fall semester immediately following high school graduation.

Scholarship Award

Up to forty one-time scholarships of \$1,000 each will be awarded to students enrolling at an LCTCS program or an Associated Builders and Contractors training program.

For more information please email suzette.rabalais@la.gov.

Connect With Our Office

Contact Information

highschoolacademics@la.gov	General questions about the office and about graduation requirements
ldefinancialaid@la.gov	Questions related to the financial aid policy or for assistance with FAFSA completion
sca@la.gov	Questions related to Supplemental Course Allocation/Course Choice
jumpstart@la.gov	Questions related to Jump Start
healthyschools@la.gov	Questions related to healthy schools, healthy communities, and whole child
ppp@la.gov	Questions related to pupil progression

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A Publication for Louisiana's
Professional School Counselors



Monthly Calls

Child Welfare and Attendance Monthly Call	February 1 at 8 a.m.
Alternative Education Community of Practice	February 8 at 10 a.m.
Office of Career and College Readiness Monthly Call	February 15 at 3 p.m.
Healthy Communities Monthly Call	February 22 at 2 p.m.

Do you or a colleague need to sign up for the [Counselor Connect](#) newsletter? Please subscribe via the following [link](#).